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V. THE MILWAUKEE MUNICIPAL MARKET

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Milwaukee has one large market. It occupies half of a city block and is approximately 400 feet long and 150 feet wide. The site is a grant to the community made in 1835 by the owners of the property when the land was platted. It was used as a wood and hay market for many years, but gradually developed into a market for truck and garden produce. It is still, however, being used as a hay market. In 1906 a canopy or protecting roof was erected along three sides of the market for the accommodation of the farmers and gardeners. The space beneath this canopy and in the interior is divided into stands or stalls. The farmers and gardeners rent these by the year or day and sell directly from the wagon. Except for a sale of hay, for which a definite time is set apart, it is strictly a market for garden truck. No fish or meat is sold, nor are there any counters or booths.

The charges for the rental of a stand or stall vary, being \$20, \$15, \$10, or \$8 per annum, according to the location of the stand or stall. The charge for rental by the day is twenty-five cents. This is the only financial obligation placed upon the farmer and truck gardener. The income from the market, which includes the receipts from rentals and charges for weighing on public scales, exceeds the yearly cost of maintaining the market. In 1908 the profit was \$1361.31; 1909, \$1280.10; 1910, \$1330.20; 1911, \$1063.75; 1912, \$1444.74; and it will exceed \$2000 in 1913. This does not take into account the cost of the erection of the canopy above mentioned, which was approximately \$3500.

Only farmers and truck gardeners are permitted to sell at the market. This regulation is strictly enforced. The problem with the Milwaukee market is to encourage the consumer to patronize it. Up to two years ago it was practically a wholesale market. Hucksters, who disposed of their goods from door to door, and grocers patronized it mainly. At that time a very small percentage of the goods was sold directly to the consumer. Through the efforts of those interested in the market and the publicity given it by the press,

the percentage of the goods sold to the customer has greatly increased and is continuing to increase. On a certain Saturday during August by actual count 3246 consumers visited the market, 360 of whom were men. On that day 249 loads of produce were brought to the market. There are in all 178 stands. All of these are rented by the year and are occupied with the exception of a row facing an alley, which is rented by the day and reserved for wholesale trade.

The market is under the supervision of the sealer of weights and measures and in direct charge of the market master. The present incumbent of the sealer's office has had wide experience in the commission business. No qualifications are required for the market master in the ordinance governing the market. He holds office for three years and receives a salary of \$900.

It is difficult to determine the effect of the market on the general prices throughout the city of those commodities which are offered at the market. The city is large, and the market reaches but a small proportion of its population. With the increasing popularity of the market, however, grocers are beginning to object to the activities by the sealer. This may be taken as an indication.

Last fall a curb market was established on the south side of the city in a densely populated district at the intersection of certain important streets that lead into the outlying country. It was this spring and gives promise of future growth.

Milwaukee is favorably situated for the further development of the market idea. The outlying district is admirably adapted to the raising of garden produce. Truck gardeners maintain their farms close to the limits of the city. The city itself is rather compact and covers a comparatively small area. Truck gardeners and farmers, therefore, find it profitable to bring their produce to town by wagon and to dispose of it directly to the middleman or consumer. Very little of the common garden produce is brought into the city by rail. On the other hand, a large percentage of the population of Milwaukee is of foreign birth or parentage. The Germans and Poles are strongly represented and readily take to direct marketing.

What municipal market policy Milwaukee shall pursue is a mooted question. Two plans are advocated, one to develop the present central market by the purchase of adjoining property, the other, to establish smaller neighborhood or even curb markets on public areas in heavily populated districts.